

TYPE 1663658/full from 275

1663658/9 (Direct type from file: 275)

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01663658 **Supplier Number:** 14840689 (**This Is The FULL TEXT**)

Roll yer own: building your own CD-ROM. (compact disc read-only memory)

Schoenfeld, Noa

CD-ROM World , v9 , n1 , p72(2)

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Text:

In the September issue of CD-ROM World I extolled the benefits of ready-made helpdesk CD-ROM. If your organization uses some or all of the many software packages covered in these discs, a helpdesk CD-ROM disc could be the tool that brightens the days of your favorite helpdesk administrator.

But what if your organization uses a specially written program, or puts a lot of effort into documenting your installation? In that case, you'll want to consider cooking up your very own CD-ROM disc. There are several approaches both to building the perfect CD-ROM and to presenting the information on it. This article looks at the manufacturing methods and then highlights the ways you might choose to display your data onscreen.

Photo-CD: A Limited Solution

Most people are familiar with Kodak's Photo-CD, which allows you to "print" photos taken with a regular camera not only to photographic paper but to your television screen (with accompanying sound, if desired). This process costs around \$25 and makes a terrific archive for visual data. The disc stores the image in 24-bit color, and the image is suitable for four-color separations if you decide to publish those photos from the company picnic in your next annual report. However, Photo-CD is not the answer for archiving your data; and Kodak does not recommend the system for that purpose. However, CD-ROM XA drives with multisession capabilities can read the discs, if the appropriate software is loaded. Images are read as PICT files. Be warned that "XA-capable" drives can read these discs, but may run afoul of the multisession capability that makes the discs useful.

CD-R For the Masses

For most uses, CD-R is the way to go. It's ideal for the small or limited-use shop that doesn't need to write to high-capacity write-once disks. ("High-capacity" is a relative term. A CD can store around 200,000 pages of text, or 10,000 photo images. If you have to ask, you want CD-R.)

If you need to make a number of discs on a regular basis, consider purchasing a CD-R recorder. Prices are now well under \$10,000 for a good unit; blank discs are available for about \$20. However, most users (again, if you have to ask ...) will want to take their data directly to a replication house.

Replication houses deal with all kinds of users, and pricing structures differ significantly depending on the number of discs you'll be printing, your packaging requirements, and the system(s) that need access to the finished product. Many companies prefer to deal in bulk, but most will at least discuss one-off prices. Two of the major replication houses are Nimbus Information Systems |(804) 985-4300

and Disc Manufacturing Inc. |(205) 859-9042
, but others are available.

Talking Specs in the House

The replication house needs to know which platform you're using. For DOS platforms, they'll ask you to describe the directory structure, the number and size of the files in each directory, the total number and size of files on the finished disc, and path-specification information for any hidden files or directories. File and directory names can contain only the alphanumeric characters and underscores. Macintosh users will need to supply the same information as well as volume ID information and, possibly, a drawing or screen capture of the desired desktop layout.

Consider also the CD-ROM file system desired. This is tricky. If you're certain you'll never need anything but Mac access to the data, you'll feel more comfortable with the Mac naming conventions possible with Apple HFS; otherwise, go with ISO-9660. Of course, it's possible to have a dual-mode ISO 9660/Apple HFS disc. You'll also need to make sure the house can work with the data in whatever form you're submitting it. You'll probably want to submit a tape or a SyQuest disk cartridge. (Don't even think of hauling in a CD's worth of data on floppies. You will become an object of scorn and derision.) While 9mm tape has been popular in the past, 8mm is preferable for its high capacity. Most houses can, of course, work with CD-ROMs and Orange Book-standard CD-R discs -- useful if you decide to update your disc farther down the road. Most houses also offer direct file transfer via modem. You'll be asked which type of packaging you prefer, and you'll be given a chance to submit artwork for it and for the disc. Most shops have guidelines for this art; be sure to ask ahead, or risk having your art sent back or redone at your expense.

What to Archive?

Actually, the question is usually not what to put on your CD-ROM but how you want to present your data. Obviously, it's great to have as much text as possible. Text is indexable, and a lot of it can go on one disc. However, you probably have a number of charts, screen shots, diagrams, and other non-text materials that should be archived.

If most of your data is already in electronic form, consider hiring a patient data-entry person to transcribe the rest of your scribbled notes, and moving your charts and images into electronic format. However, it may be simpler for you to submit scanned images. Scanned images may require access software for optimal indexing access. OCR (optical character recognition) is also an option, but know that OCR is often much less accurate than statistics would have you think. Macintosh users have a bit of flexibility. No Hands Software |(415) 321-7340

offers Common-Ground, a package that indexes CD-ROM text but stores the document as entered. (A viewer is included.) A PC version is reportedly

in the works.

However you choose to archive your data, keeping a custom-made helpdesk on CD-ROM has advantages both for your support

staff and for the

rest of your users, who can be encouraged to look for their own solutions to commonly answered questions. Think carefully about the structure of the data you're submitting; developing a user-friendly section with the fifteen most commonly asked questions can save a surprising amount of time with a minimum amount of effort.

If you choose to make your disc indexable, users may find themselves capable of troubleshooting relatively complex problems with less assistance. And even if you don't choose to make your disc widely accessible, the archive you create can be of great value to succeeding staff members, most of whom would rather view tips, tricks, and vital phone numbers on a screen rather than strewn through their predecessors' offices.

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Special Features: illustration; cartoon

SIC Codes: 7372 Prepackaged software

File Segment: TI File 148

TYPE 1655988/full from 149

1655988/9 (Direct type from file: 149)

TGG Health&Wellness DB(SM)

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01655988 **Supplier Number:** 18936169 (THIS IS THE FULL TEXT)

VHA rolls out patient record app in Alabama, Texas. (the Veterans Health Administration's Computerized Patient Record System) (Snapshot: Veterans Affairs) (Government Activity)

Jackson, William

Government Computer News , v15 , n29 , p25(1)

Nov 18 ,

1996

Publication Format: Magazine/Journal

ISSN: 0738-4300

Language: English

Record Type: Fulltext; Abstract **Target Audience:** Trade

Word Count: 721 **Line Count:** 00061

Abstract: The Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is alpha-testing its Computerized Patient Record System (CPRS) in Alabama and Texas. The system, developed under the Veterans Health Information Systems and

Technology Architecture (VISTA) project, is designed to make it easier for VHA's clinicians to retrieve and enter patient information. It features a GUI and is based on Borland's Delphi Developer. It is compatible with Windows 95 and NT, and Windows for Workgroups 3.11. Also being alpha-tested is a roll-and-scroll text version of CPRS; full implementation of the system is scheduled for 1997, a year before VHA's switch from dumb terminals to client-server systems. Testers say that even with the bugs in version 1.0, CPRS is already making possible time savings.

Text:

Things are changing at the Veterans Health Administration. Its 172 clinics and medical centers are moving to primary and outpatient care. And it is replacing thousands of dumb terminals with client-server systems on fiber-optic LANs connected to an increasingly robust WAN.

The changes are bringing about a long-held goal of the VHA: a Computerized Patient Record System. CPRS now is in alpha test in Alabama and Texas, and not only is it fully integrated with VHA's workhorse Decentralized Hospital Computer System, but it sports a graphical user interface as well.

Worth the wait

It has been a long time coming, Dr. Robert Kolodner, VHA's deputy chief information officer, said.

"We recognized back in the early 1980s that where we needed to be going was a client-server, GUI-based interface for the clinicians to retrieve and enter information about the patients," Kolodner said. "At that time we had neither the infrastructure nor felt we could deliver the product."

CPRS is the product of the new Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VISTA), an expanded program that includes software development once done under DHCP. According to VHA, the goal of vista is to "provide clinicians with software that is flexible enough to be implemented in a wide variety of settings," with a Windows interface.

The switch to Windows is new at VHA, which for 14 years has used a growing suite of DHCP applications written in M and running on Digital

Equipment Corp. VAX systems. The first application to run under Microsoft Corp.'s Windows was released in May.

CPRS is being developed with Borland International Inc.'s Delphi Developer and is compatible with Windows for Workgroups 3.11, Windows 95 and NT. It will let VA maintain its massive investment in the M programming language by accessing DHCP's M-based File Manager database.

CPRS runs on a Digital Alpha platform at the VHA medical center in Tuscaloosa, where CPRS began testing in July. Although the GUI is an important feature, a roll-and-scroll text version of the application is being tested at the same time. The current timetable calls for full rollout of CPRS as much as a year before the scheduled completion of the switch to

client-server platforms at VHA in 1998.

Beta sites

After three months of testing in Tuscaloosa, CPRS was installed for testing at VHA's Central Texas facility in October, with test sites in Boston and Washington to follow. Beta sites already have been selected, and a full rollout is expected by mid-1997.

"It's aggressive and optimistic," Ken Ruyle, director of the VA Medical Center at Tuscaloosa, said of the schedule.

The recent changes at VHA have made CPRS necessary as well as possible. With patients being assigned to primary care teams of physicians, there is a grater need to share information more effectively.

The key is that all of the information is pulled together, rather than having stovepipe information for each discipline," Kolodner said.

The results so far have been positive, Ruyle said. Although some of the older physicians with little experience on computers were at first skeptical, "they've overcome their reluctance through use."

The bugs are still being ironed out of Version 1.0, but "some of the time savings are already being seen," Debra Lindley, project director for the alpha test, said.

CPRS gives doctors and nurses, students, teachers and administrators access to information on a patient's medical history, treatments, progress notes, problems and discharge summaries in many formats. Each user's level of access is defined by a user profile. Information can be reviewed, entered and edited, depending on access level, and doctors have a digital signature that lets them enter orders.

Training is the first challenge in adopting CPRS.

"I think that the biggest obstacle that will be found by the other medical centers." Ruyle said. "Their success will depend on the support staff put in place for training."

At Tuscaloosa, a core staff of four does the training, which takes about three hours per person. But many users find even the text version of CPRS intuitive and easy to use, Lindley said, and the Windows version is even easier.

"If you are familiar with the Windows environment, you can get right on the GUT version." she said.

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Special Features: illustration; photograph; chart

Descriptors: United States. Department of Veterans Affairs--Data processing; Medical records--Data processing

File Segment: CD File 275

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